

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08
OMB-01 TRSE-00 STR-05 COME-00 OES-07 AGRE-00 CU-04
FRB-03 /137 W

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R 211325Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6143
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 08612

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, GE, XB
SUBJECT: THE GDR AND ASIA
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REFS: NOTAL (A) BERLIN 7765 (B) BERLIN 8345
- (C) BERLIN 7303 (D) BERLIN 8126
- (E) BERLIN 6560 (F) BERLIN 7849
- (G) BERLIN 5741 (H) BERLIN 5475
- (I) BERLIN 6028 (J) BERLIN 8085
- (K) BERLIN 8128

SUMMARY: A SPATE OF CURRENT AND PLANNED VISITS OF HIGH-LEVEL GDR OFFICIALS TO ASIAN CAPITALS HIGHLIGHTS AN APPARENT INTENSIFICATION OF EAST GERMAN DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY IN THIS AREA. AS REPORTED (REF A) CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE AND PARTY CHIEF HONECKER PLANS TO VISIT PYONGYANG AND HANOI IN DECEMBER OF THIS YEAR AND WILL PROBABLY VISIT NEW DELHI NEXT YEAR. PARTY SECRETARY MITTAG IS CURRENTLY IN JAPAN FOR TRADE NEGOTIATIONS (REF B) AND FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER WILL VISIT JAPAN EARLY IN DECEMBER. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE HEARD FROM DIPLOMATIC SOURCES HERE THAT THE GDR WILL SOON SEND A TRADE DELEGATION TO SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA. THERE FOLLOWS BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON GDR RELATIONS WITH SOME OF THE COUNTRIES TO BE VISITED AND OTHERS IN THE AREA IN WHICH THE GDR APPEARS TO BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO AN INDIAN EMBASSY SOURCE HERE, FOLLOWING THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT IN NEW DELHI THERE WAS A PERIOD OF PROBING BY THE GDR TO DETERMINE WHETHER GOOD RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE. THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL VISITS DESIGNED, AMONG OTHER MATTERS, TO TEST THE POLITICAL WATERS. AT THE END OF AUGUST, GDR DEPUTY FOREIGN
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MINISTER KLAUS WILLERDING HAD POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS IN NEW DELHI AND GERHARD WEISS, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE GDR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, IN INDIA AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER TO TAKE PART IN THE MEETING OF THE GDR-INDIAN JOINT COMMISSION (REF C), MET WITH PREMIER DESAI. ACCORDING TO THE INDIAN EMBASSY SOURCE, BOTH THE GDR AND GOI WERE VERY SATISFIED WITH THESE TALKS AND RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE HARMONIOUS. THE PRINCIPAL INTEREST, IN BILATERAL TERMS, IS TRADE. SEVERAL AGREEMENTS ON "CONSOLIDATION OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS" WERE SIGNED IN SEPTEMBER IN NEW DELHI AND AN INDIAN DELEGATION IS VISITING EAST BERLIN NOW TO NEGOTIATE A TRADE PLAN FOR 1978. FINALLY, HONECKER EXPECTS TO MAKE A STATE VISIT TO INDIA (REF D). ACCORDING TO INDIAN EMBASSY SOURCE HERE, THE VISIT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE THIS YEAR BECAUSE OF SCHEDULING PROBLEMS, BUT WILL CERTAINLY OCCUR. INDIAN SOURCE ALSO NOTED THAT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF NEW DELHI, RELATIONS WITH THE GDR WERE NOT AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS, AND THEREFORE HONECKER TRIP HAD TO TAKE A LOWER PRIORITY. IT APPEARS, HOWEVER, THAT THE GDR ATTACHES

SOME IMPORTANCE TO STRENGTHENING BILATERAL
TIES WITH INDIA.

3. THE GDR'S RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM SEEM TO BE CORDIAL.
THERE IS A CONSTANT FLOW OF VISITORS BETWEEN EAST BERLIN
AND HANOI (REFS E AND F). THESE HAVE INCLUDED VISITS
BY LE DUAN, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE CPV, TO EAST BERLIN IN OCTOBER 1975 (AT WHICH TIME A
LONG-TERM AGREEMENT ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION WAS REACHED),
DEFENSE MINISTER GENERAL GIAP IN MARCH-APRIL OF THIS
YEAR (REF G) AND LE DUC THO AND FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN
DUY TRINH (SEPARATELY) IN JULY. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WEISS MET WITH PREMIER PHAM VON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BERLIN 08612

CORRECTED COPY - ADDED LINE PARA 4.

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DONG IN HANOI IN FEBRUARY 1977 FOR TALKS. WEISS WAS IN VIETNAM ATTENDING A MEETING OF THE JOINT GDR-VIETNAMESE COMMISSION FOR ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. THE GDR HAS GIVEN ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM, APPARENTLY FOR SOME TIME. ACCORDING TO EAST GERMAN PRESS REPORTS, 30 MILLION EAST MARKS HAVE BEEN RAISED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION THIS YEAR FOR ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM WHICH HAS BEEN USED TO PROVIDE PRODUCTION AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND TEXTILES. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE STUDENTS IN THE GDR AND THE GDR CONTINUES TO GIVE MILITARY AND TECHNICAL TRAINING.

4. GDR RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA SEEM, IN CONTRAST, RESTRAINED, OR AT LEAST LESS BUSY. ALTHOUGH NORTH KOREA APPEARS TO MAINTAIN A LARGER EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN THAN DOES THE PRV (REF H) THE KOREANS DO NOT SEEM TO BE POLITICALLY ACTIVE HERE, AT LEAST JUDGING BY THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF TRIPS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS.

5. THE MOST RECENT ANNIVERSARY MESSAGES TO NORTH KOREA AND VIETNAM HIGHLIGHT THE DIFFERENCE IN GDR POLICY. THE MESSAGE TO NORTH KOREA IS BRIEF AND REFERS TO THE CONVICTION THAT FRIENDLY RELATIONS WILL DEVELOP AND DEEPEN. THE MESSAGE TO THE VIETNAMESE IS LONGER, NOTICEABLY WARMER IN TONE, CONTAINS "BROTHERLY" GREETINGS AND STATES THAT THE "TRADITIONAL BROTHERLY RELATIONS AND THE CLOSE COMRADELY COOPERATION" ARE DEVELOPING. ON THE OTHER HAND, SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE POLITBURO MEMBER AXEN MET WITH THE NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR IN SEPTEMBER IN WHAT WAS DESCRIBED IN THE PRESS AS A "CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE" AND HONECKER'S BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO KIM
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IL-SUNG IN APRIL WERE WARM.

6. AS WOULD BE EXPECTED, THE GDR'S RELATIONS WITH MONGOLIA ARE GOOD. MONGOLIAN CHIEF OF STATE TSEDENBAL

VISITED THE GDR IN MAY OF THIS YEAR ON WHICH OCCASION
A TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WAS SIGNED
(REF I).

7. AS NOTED (REF J), THE BURMESE FOREIGN MINISTER
U HLA PHONE VISITED THE GDR IN LATE OCTOBER AND THERE
APPEARS TO BE A STRENGTHENING IN PARTY-TO-PARTY
TIES.

8. HONECKER WILL VISIT MANILA IN DECEMBER AS PART
OF HIS FAR EAST TRIP. ACCORDING TO A DIPLOMATIC
SOURCE IN EAST BERLIN, THIS WAS ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO
BE ONLY A BRIEF TECHNICAL LAYOVER BUT NOW APPEARS TO
HAVE BEEN EXTENDED TO A 24-48 HOUR STOP INVOLVING AT
LEAST SOME PROTOCOLARY FUNCTIONS, REPORTEDLY AT MARCOS'
REQUEST.

9. COMMENT: THE CONCURRENCE OF THIS ACTIVE DIPLOMACY
IN THE FAR EAST AND IN SOUTH ASIA MAY BE THE
RESULT, IN PART, OF THE ACCIDENT OF SCHEDULES AND
ITINERARIES. HOWEVER, THE ACTIVITY DOES APPEAR TO BE
PART OF A SYSTEMATIC GDR EFFORT TO EXPAND POLITICAL
AND TRADE INFLUENCE IN THIS AREA. WE ARE STRUCK BY THE
SELECTION OF COUNTRIES WHICH, APART FROM THEIR POSSIBLE
INTEREST AS TRADING PARTNERS, ALL SEEM TO PLAY
IMPORTANT ROLES VIS-A-VIS THE PRC. AS NOTED (REF K)
THE GDR HAS CRITICIZED THE NEW LEADERSHIP IN PEKING,
APPARENTLY REJECTING PRC OVERTURES TO IMPROVE
RELATIONS. WE ASSUME THAT THE GDR IS ACTING IN
CONCERT WITH THE USSR TO STRENGTHEN PRO-MOSCOW AND
ANTI-PRC ELEMENTS IN THIS AREA. END COMMENT. BOLEN

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Message Attributes

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